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REMARKS

Claims 41 and 46 have been amended, and claim 45 has been canceled herein. Upon entry of this amendment, claims 21-44 and 46 will be pending in the above-identified application.

A credit card payment form accompanies this response in payment of the fee for a two-month extension of time.

Double Patenting - Claims 21-44 and 46

Applicant will consider the appropriateness of a terminal disclaimer upon allowance of the pending claims.

Section 102 - Claims 21-30, 32, 34, 37-42, 44, and 46

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection of claims 21-30, 32, 34, 37-42, 44, and 46 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,581,538 (Lenhart).

Claims 21-30 and 32 recite a method of performing a medical procedure including providing a radiation-shielding cubicle having an *interior defining a medical personnel region* and including a first wall having an opening therein, locating the cubicle with respect to an x-ray table so *a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening into the interior of the cubicle*, and separating medical personnel from an x-ray emitter disposed outside of the cubicle using the first wall to shield the medical personnel from radiation emitted by the x-ray emitter.

Lenhart does not disclose or suggest providing a radiation-shielding cubicle having an *interior defining a medical personnel region*, nor separating medical personnel from an *x-ray emitter disposed outside of the cubicle*. Rather, Lenhart discloses a u-shaped shield 16 for shielding medical personnel from an x-ray source 14, wherein the source is positioned within an interior of the u-shaped shield and medical personnel are located outside the interior of the shield. Lenhart also does not disclose or suggest locating the cubicle with respect to an x-ray table so *a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening into the interior of the cubicle*. Because Lenhart

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does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of claims, the Section 102 rejection of claims 21-30 and 32 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 34, 37, and 38 recite a method of using a radiation protection system including an x-ray table and a radiation-shielding screen that includes at least one port, wherein the method includes, among other things, *inserting procedural equipment through the port to access the patient with the procedural equipment*, and *performing a medical procedure on the patient using the procedural equipment*.

Lenhart does not disclose or suggest *inserting procedural equipment through a port to access a patient with the procedural equipment*, nor *performing a medical procedure on the patient using the procedural equipment*. Rather, Lenhart discloses inserting a hand between flaps 48, 52 of a radiation-shielding curtain 40 to touch a patient, but does not disclose inserting procedural equipment through the flaps nor performing a medical procedure on the patient using the procedural equipment. Because Lenhart does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of the claims, the Section 102 rejection of claims 34, 37, and 38 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claim 39 recites a method of performing a medical procedure including, among other things, providing a radiation-shielding wall having an opening therein, and locating the wall with respect to an x-ray table so *a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening*. As discussed above, Lenhart does not disclose or suggest providing a radiation-shielding wall having an opening therein, and locating the wall with respect to an x-ray table so *a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening*. Because Lenhart does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of the claim, the Section 102 rejection of claim 39 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claim 40 recites a method of using a radiation protection system including an x-ray table, a radiation-shielding screen that includes at least one port, and controls for controlling the system, wherein the method includes, among other things, accessing the controls through the port, and controlling the system using the controls.

Lenhart does not disclose or suggest a method of using a radiation protection system including *accessing controls through a port*, nor *controlling the system using the controls*. Rather, Lenhart discloses inserting a hand between flaps 48, 52 of a radiation-

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shielding curtain 40 to touch a patient, but does not disclose accessing controls through the flaps nor controlling a system using the controls. Because Lenhart does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of the claim, the Section 102 rejection of claim 40 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 41, 42, and 44 recite a radiation protection system for shielding medical personnel from radiation emitted by an x-ray emitter during radiological procedures, wherein the system includes a table sized and shaped for supporting a patient, a radiation-shielding barrier, and a radiation-shielding screen connected to the barrier and *attached to the table*.

Lenhart does not disclose or suggest a radiation protection system including a table sized and shaped for supporting a patient, a radiation-shielding barrier, and a radiation-shielding screen connected to the barrier and *attached to the table*. Rather, Lenhart discloses a u-shaped shield 16 for shielding medical personnel from an x-ray source 14, and a radiation-shielding curtain 40 that is hung from the shield 16 but is not attached to a table 12 supporting a patient. Because Lenhart does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of the claims, the Section 102 rejection of claims 41, 42, and 44 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claim 46 recites a method for shielding medical personnel from radiation emitted by an x-ray emitter during radiological procedures including, among other things, shielding the medical personnel from x-ray radiation emitted from a patient by positioning a radiation-shielding screen between the medical personnel and the patient, and *attaching the screen to a table for supporting the patient*. As discussed above, Lenhart does not disclose or suggest attaching a radiation-shielding screen to a table for supporting the patient. Rather, Lenhart discloses a u-shaped shield 16 for shielding medical personnel from an x-ray source 14, and a radiation-shielding curtain 40 that is hung from the shield 16 but is not attached to a table 12 supporting a patient. Because Lenhart does not disclose or suggest all of the elements of the claim, the Section 102 rejection of claim 46 is improper and should be withdrawn.

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Section 103 - Claims 31, 35, and 36

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection of claims 31, 35 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lenhart in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,325,538 (Heesch).

Claim 31 recites a method of performing a medical procedure including providing a radiation-shielding cubicle having *an interior defining a medical personnel region* and including a first wall having an opening therein, locating the cubicle with respect to an x-ray table so *a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening into the interior of the cubicle*, and separating medical personnel from *an x-ray emitter disposed outside of the cubicle* using the first wall to shield the medical personnel from radiation emitted by the x-ray emitter.

As discussed above, Lenhart does not disclose or suggest providing a radiation-shielding cubicle having *an interior defining a medical personnel region*, separating medical personnel from *an x-ray emitter disposed outside of the cubicle*, nor locating the cubicle with respect to an x-ray table so *a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening into the interior of the cubicle*. Heesch does not make up for the deficiencies in Lenhart. Because the cited references, considered alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest all of the elements of claim 31, the Section 103 rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 35 and 36 recite a method of using a radiation protection system including an x-ray table and a radiation-shielding screen that includes at least one port, wherein the method includes, among other things, *inserting procedural equipment through the port to access the patient with the procedural equipment*, and *performing a medical procedure on the patient using the procedural equipment*.

As discussed above, Lenhart does not disclose or suggest *inserting procedural equipment through a port to access a patient with the procedural equipment*, nor *performing a medical procedure on the patient using the procedural equipment*. Heesch does not make up for the deficiencies in Lenhart. Because the cited references, considered alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest all of the elements of claims 35 and 36, the Section 103 rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

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Section 103 - Claims 33 and 43

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection of claims 33 and 43 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lenhart in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,851,182 (Sahadevan).

Claim 33 recites a method of performing a medical procedure including providing a radiation-shielding cubicle having *an interior defining a medical personnel region* and including a first wall having an opening therein, locating the cubicle with respect to an x-ray table so *a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening into the interior of the cubicle*, and separating medical personnel from *an x-ray emitter disposed outside of the cubicle* using the first wall to shield the medical personnel from radiation emitted by the x-ray emitter.

As discussed above, Lenhart does not disclose or suggest providing a radiation-shielding cubicle having *an interior defining a medical personnel region*, separating medical personnel from *an x-ray emitter disposed outside of the cubicle*, nor locating the cubicle with respect to an x-ray table so *a portion of the x-ray table extends through the opening into the interior of the cubicle*. Sahadevan does not make up for the deficiencies in Lenhart. Because the cited references, considered alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest all of the elements of claim 33, the Section 103 rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claim 43 recites a radiation protection system for shielding medical personnel from radiation emitted by an x-ray emitter during radiological procedures, wherein the system includes a table sized and shaped for supporting a patient, a radiation-shielding barrier, and a radiation-shielding screen connected to the barrier and *attached to the table*.

As discussed above, Lenhart does not disclose or suggest a radiation protection system including a table sized and shaped for supporting a patient, a radiation-shielding barrier, and a radiation-shielding screen connected to the barrier and *attached to the table*. Sahadevan does not make up for the deficiencies in Lenhart. Because the cited references, considered alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest all of the elements of claim 43, the Section 103 rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

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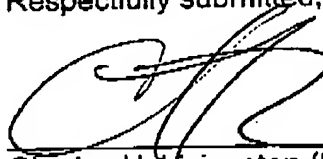
CONCLUSION

Although Applicant has only argued the independent claims herein for brevity, there may be other arguments distinguishing dependent claims from the cited art that are not argued herein. Applicant intends to preserve any such arguments.

If the Examiner believes that there is any issue which could be resolved by an interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Dated: _____

Respectfully submitted,



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